

Express Mail No. EL844344196US

PATENT APPLICATION OF

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ENTITLED

**DIAGNOSTICS FOR INDUSTRIAL PROCESS CONTROL
AND MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS**

Docket No. P32.12-0006

DIAGNOSTICS FOR INDUSTRIAL PROCESS CONTROL AND MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to field
5 devices operating in the process control and
measurement industry. In particular, the present
invention relates to field devices with improved
diagnostic capabilities.

Field devices, such as process variable
10 transmitters, are used by a number of industries to
remotely sense a process variable. A controller may
then transmit control information to another field
device, such as a valve, in the process to modify a
control parameter. For example, information related
15 to pressure of a process fluid may be transmitted to a
control room and used to control a valve in an oil
refining process. Other examples of a field devices
include handheld configuration and/or calibration
devices.

20 One of the relatively recent advances in
process control and measurement has been the
implementation of all-digital process communication
protocols. One example of such an all-digital
communication protocol is FOUNDATION Fieldbus.
25 Fieldbus is directed to defining a communication layer
or protocol for transmitting information on a process
communication loop. The Fieldbus protocol
specification is ISA-S50.02-1992, promulgated by the
Instrument Society of America in 1992. Fieldbus is a
30 process industry communications protocol described in
the Fieldbus technical overview Understanding
FOUNDATION™ Fieldbus Technology (1998) available from
Rosemount Inc. in Eden Prairie, MN. As used herein,

"fieldbus" is intended to mean any communication protocol operating in accordance with the ISA-S50.02-1992 specification and equivalents thereof, process communication protocols that are backwardly compatible
5 to the ISA-S50.02-1992 protocol, and other standards operating in accordance with International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Fieldbus Standard 61158. For example, for the purposes of this patent document, Profibus, ControlNet, P-Net, SwiftNet,
10 WorldFIP and Interbus-S, is considered a fieldbus.

Advantages of fieldbus include relatively high-speed digital communication as well as signaling levels that facilitate compliance with intrinsic safety as set forth in APPROVAL STANDARD INTRINSICALLY
15 SAFE APPARATUS AND ASSOCIATED APPARATUS FOR USE IN CLASS I, II AND III, Division 1, Hazardous (Classified) locations, Class No. 3610, promulgated by Factory Mutual Research, October, 1988. Industrial processing environments that require intrinsic safety
20 compliance provide an added challenge for electrical instrumentation and automation of the process control system since such environments may contain flammable or explosive vapors. Accordingly, process communication loops operating in such processing
25 environments are typically energy-limited. Multiple redundant circuits are used to ensure that energy levels on the communication loop are below a safe energy level so that the energy cannot ignite the flammable vapors, even under fault conditions. Field
30 devices in such environments are also generally energy limited as well. Process communication loops that pass through the safe area of the flammable processing environment to outside equipment such as a controller

typically pass through energy limiting barriers such as an intrinsic safety barrier so that a fault occurring outside the flammable environment will not generate a spark inside the frequently explosive fluid processing environment. Process communication loops that have the potential for higher level signals that could spark under fault conditions are often not permitted to pass through or connect to equipment in a flammable processing environment.

10 In some digital process measurement installations, all field devices communicate over essentially the same digital process communication loop. In such cases, it is much more important to diagnose problems before they become critical and affect the operation of the loop. For example, should a single device fail and begin to draw too much energy, the signaling levels on the process communication loop could collapse thereby inhibiting all communication over the loop and effectively causing the system to fail.

20 While fieldbus has proved to be an advance in the art of process control and measurement, the nature of its all-digital communication in applications which are relatively intolerant of faults, drives an ongoing need for enhanced diagnostics, not only for the fieldbus devices themselves, but for the process control system in general.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

30 A field device includes diagnostic circuitry adapted to measure a diagnostic characteristic related to a digital process control and measurement system. The measured characteristic is used to provide a

diagnostic output indicative of a condition of the digital process control and measurement system by comparing it to predicted or anticipated characteristics developed by models or historical data. Depending on the difference between the measured characteristic and the predicted characteristic, faults and/or deterioration in the process can be detected, depending on the type of characteristic monitored.

10 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a system block diagram of a process control and measurement system.

Fig. 2 is a system block diagram of a field device incorporating diagnostic circuitry in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a diagrammatic illustration of an analytical module useful with embodiments of the present invention.

20 Fig. 4 is a system block diagram of a field device illustrating a technical challenge of obtaining diagnostic information for intrinsically safe embodiments of the present invention.

Fig. 5 is a chart of current versus time for a fieldbus device.

25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Fig. 1 illustrates an exemplary system in which embodiments of the present invention are useful. System 10 includes controller 12, I/O and control sub-system 14, intrinsic safety (IS) barrier 16, process communication loop 18 and field devices 20. Controller 12 is coupled to I/O and control sub-system 14 via link 22 which can be any suitable link such as

a local area network (LAN) operating in accordance with Ethernet signaling protocols or any other suitable protocol. I/O and control sub-system 14 is coupled to intrinsic safety barrier 16 which in turn is coupled to process communication loop 18 to allow data communication between loop 18 and I/O and control sub-system 14 in a manner that limits energy passing therethrough.

Process communication loop 18 is a fieldbus process communication loop and is coupled to field devices 20, which are shown coupled to process communication loop 18 in a multi-drop configuration. The illustrated multi-drop wiring configuration vastly simplifies system wiring compared to other topologies such as the star topology.

FIG. 2 is a system block diagram of field device 20 in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. Device 20 includes power module 30, fieldbus loop communicator 32, controller 34, and diagnostic circuitry 36. The power module 30 and fieldbus loop communicator 32 are coupled to process communication loop 18 (not shown) via terminals 38 (two of which are shown). Power module 30 receives electrical energy from process communication loop 18 and provides power to all components of field device 20 as indicated by arrow 40 labeled "to all".

Fieldbus loop communicator 32 is adapted for digitally communicating over process communication loop 18 via terminals 38. For example, if process communication loop 18 operates in accordance with the FOUNDATION™ fieldbus protocol, fieldbus loop communicator 32 is similarly adapted for FOUNDATION™ fieldbus communication. Loop communicator 32 receives

process communication signals over loop 18 and provides process communication data based upon such signals to controller 34. Conversely, controller 34 can provide data to loop communicator 32 which is then transformed into suitable process communication signals for transmission over process communication loop 18.

Diagnostic circuitry 36 is coupled to controller 34 and to process communication loop 18 as indicated by broken line 42. Additionally, diagnostic circuitry 36 is also operably coupled to loop communicator 32 via broken line 44. As will be described in greater detail later in the specification, couplings 42, 44 may be direct couplings or indirect couplings. As used herein, a "direct coupling" is intended to mean any diagnostic circuit that electrically couples to a circuit of interest to measure a parameter thereof. Conversely, "indirect coupling" is intended to mean any diagnostic circuit that measures a parameter of a circuit of interest without electrically coupling to the circuit of interest. Couplings 42 and 44 operate to allow diagnostic circuitry 36 to sample characteristics of loop 18 (via coupling 42) and loop data (via coupling 44).

Diagnostic circuitry 36 measures a number of parameters related to digital process communication loop 18 via coupling 42. By measuring various voltages and currents on the digital loop 18, these various parameters can be ascertained or otherwise derived. Preferably, the voltages are measured by an analog-to-digital converter within diagnostic circuitry 36 and a digital signal is then passed to

controller 34. Examples of loop related measurements include, without limitation:

- instantaneous DC voltage level on the loop;
- long-term variation of the loop DC voltage;
- 5 instantaneous currents being drawn from the loop by the field device;
- long-term variation of the current drawn from the loop by the field device;
- 10 peak-to-peak communications signal strength of the messages on the loop and identification by Tag device address, etc., as to which device has which signal strength (these measurements also include those message transmissions from field device 20 itself);
- 15 the lowest signal source on the loop and its device ID and address;
- the quiescent noise level on the loop; and
- 20 the characteristic impedance of the loop.

The above-listed individual loop parameters each provide an indication of system viability. For example, measuring long-term variation of the loop DC voltage allows field device 20 to detect a relatively slow voltage drop over time that would have otherwise gone undetected and which drop indicates a degradation in the process communication loop. By measuring peak-to-peak communication signal strength, indications of proper installation, proper number of bus terminators, 25 proper wire type and correct network termination are provided. Although the above-listed network-related measurements are set forth individually, it is expressly contemplated that additional diagnostic

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information can be ascertained by combining various measurements, and/or performing trend analyses on the individual or combined measurements. Diagnostic circuitry 36 can predict device failure based upon
5 trending of all or some of the above-mentioned parameters. The diagnostic information can be essentially "pushed" through the system to a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) for maintenance work orders. Additionally, the diagnostic
10 information can be selected to alert an operator of the control system to change control strategies.

As illustrated in FIG. 2, diagnostic circuitry 36 can be coupled to fieldbus loop communicator 32 such that diagnostic circuitry 36 has
15 access to data communicated through fieldbus loop communicator 32. In this regard, diagnostic circuitry 36 is able to ascertain a number of protocol-related attributes. Such attributes include, without limitation:

- 20 the number of devices on the loop;
- frequency monitoring of Cyclic Redundancy Checks (CRC) which informs the operator of the frequency of CRC errors and whether such frequency indicates an
25 imminent criticality;
- loop performance data such as token rotation time; and
- identification of the present Link Active Scheduler (LAS).

30 Finally, diagnostic circuitry 36 can also provide quiescent current and voltage rail monitoring of the device electronics of field device 20 in order to indicate the continued health, or otherwise, of the

electronics within field device 20.

Any of the above individual or combined measurements themselves provide valuable diagnostic data for the digital process control and measurement system. Such diagnostic data may allow earlier detection of problems with the process communication loop, or devices on the process communication loop such that remedial action may be taken earlier and thus, failure averted. However, additional analyses of the measured diagnostic information provide additional information about the process control and measurement system. Such additional diagnostic calculations and analysis are generally performed by controller 34 which can include a microprocessor. In one embodiment, software in memory (not shown) within controller 34 is used to implement a neural network in controller 34 such as neural network 100 illustrated in FIG. 3. Neural networks are generally known, and network 100 can be trained using known training algorithms such as the back propagation network (BPN) to develop the neural network module. The networks includes input nodes 102, hidden nodes 104 and output nodes 106. Various data measurements D_1 through D_n are provided as inputs to the input nodes 102 which act as an input buffer. The input nodes 102 modify the received data by various ways in accordance with a training algorithm and the outputs are provided to the hidden nodes 104. The hidden layer 104 is used to characterize and analyze a non-linear property of the diagnostic information. The last layer, output layer 106, provides an output 108 that is an indication of diagnostic information related to process control and measurement.

The neural network 100 can be trained either through modeling or empirical techniques which are known in the art and in which actual process communication signals and information sensors are used
5 to provide training input to neural network 100.

Another technique for analyzing the diagnostic data provided by diagnostic circuitry 36 is through the use of a rule-based system in which controller 34 stores rules, expected results and
10 sensitivity parameters.

Another analysis technique is fuzzy logic. For example, fuzzy logic algorithms can be employed on the data measurements D_1 through D_n prior to their input into neural network 100. Additionally, neural
15 network 100 can implement a fuzzy-node algorithm in which the various neurons of the network implement fuzzy algorithms. The various analysis techniques can be used alone or in combinations. Additionally, other analysis techniques are considered within the scope of
20 the present invention.

As noted above, intrinsically safe applications provide an additional hurdle for obtaining the diagnostic information discussed above. FIG. 4 is a block diagram of a field device 200
25 illustrating the challenge of obtaining diagnostic information for an intrinsically safe field device. Field device 200, like field device 20, includes isolation circuitry (not shown in FIG. 2) that is electrically interposed between digital process
30 communication loop 18, and device circuitry 202. Isolation circuitry 204 functions similarly to intrinsic safety barrier 16 described with respect to FIG. 1 in that it limits the amount of energy that can

pass onto process communication loop 18. As described above, a number of diagnostic parameters are obtained by measuring the voltage on process communication loop 18. Thus, one would be tempted to couple diagnostic
5 circuitry 36 directly to loop 18. However, in intrinsically safe applications, such direct coupling bypasses isolation circuitry 204 and thus, creates a duplicate path where unlimited energy could pass from circuit 202 onto loop 18 and potentially generate a
10 spark. Thus, if diagnostic circuitry 206 is to be coupled directly to loop 18, it must include its own isolation circuitry. Such additional isolation circuitry adds to unit costs, consumes additional power and takes up additional board space within the
15 field device. However, as can be appreciated, in order to directly measure network or loop characteristics in an intrinsically safe environment, such additional isolation circuitry is required.

Another way of obtaining diagnostic
20 information related to process communication loop 18 is via indirect methods. As mentioned above, indirect methods of measuring a parameter of interest do so without electrically coupling to the circuit of interest. In fieldbus, each device draws a
25 substantially constant current I_{segment} and operates on a voltage between about 9 volts and about 32 volts DC. Fieldbus communication signaling is effected by causing the device to modulate the current drawn and thereby communicate. Fig. 5 illustrates current
30 versus time I_{rst} for a typical fieldbus installation. For most of the time, the current I is equal to I_{segment} . However, between time t_0 and t_1 , the current shifts rapidly while fieldbus communication occurs. The

communication current is labeled $I_{\text{Communication}}$. As can be seen, $I_{\text{Communication}}$ is substantially centered about I_{segment} and thus has a DC current of approximately zero. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the power drawn by a fieldbus device is generally equal to I_{segment} times the loop voltage (which generally ranges between 9 VDC and 32 VDC, but which is substantially constant for a given installation). The fieldbus signaling circuitry emanates heat and thus operates at an elevated temperature that is related to the fieldbus power and the thermal resistance of the fieldbus signaling circuitry. Once the design of the fieldbus signaling circuitry is complete, the thermal resistance is substantially constant. Thus, the operating temperature of the fieldbus signaling circuitry is proportional to the power of the fieldbus device. Since I_{segment} is substantially constant, the temperature of the fieldbus signaling circuitry can be considered to operate at an elevated temperature that is roughly proportional to the loop voltage. Thus, sensing temperature of such fieldbus signaling circuitry provides an indication of loop voltage. Preferably, such sensing is done in the form of a temperature sensor disposed on the circuit board in relatively close proximity to the fieldbus signaling circuitry such that heat emanating from the signaling circuitry is sensed by the temperature sensor. The temperature sensor can be a thermocouple, thermistor, resistance temperature device (RTD), or any other suitable temperature sensing element. The measured temperature is then used to compute loop voltage and thus provides an indirect measurement of a diagnostic parameter.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments, workers skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made in form and detail without departing from
5 the spirit and scope of the invention.